

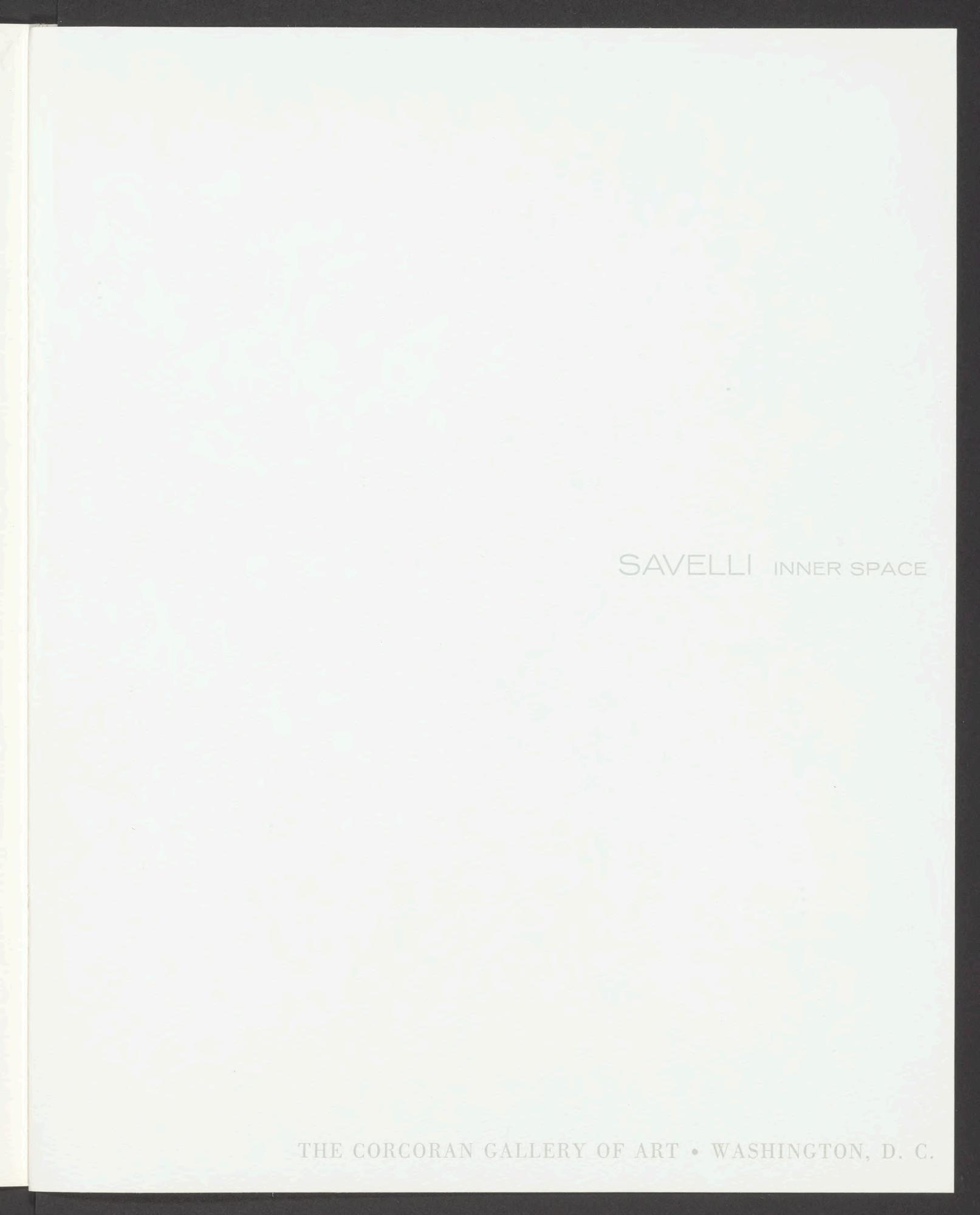
SAVELLI

INNER
SPACE

DANTE'S

PARADISE-INFERNO

INNER
SPACE



SAVELLI INNER SPACE

THE CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART • WASHINGTON, D. C.

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Angelo Savelli, who came to this country from Italy over a decade ago, began creating paintings which by 1957 took on the simple but profound minimalization of surface which characterized much of the most advanced art of the period. These paintings were completely white on white and contained a hint of the harsh abstract expressionist style which preceded them only through the use of elements of collage. During this period Savelli pioneered in the development of a process of white relief lithography for which he is best known. In the next few years he began investigating the shaped canvas—before it became an accepted convention—and introduced pieces of rope as

a basic form. Nevertheless, his work looked Italian rather than American to those who were acquainted with it—a quality which, unfortunately, contributed to his difficulty in gaining acceptance at the level which his remarkable achievement deserved.

In 1964, Savelli began a series of white, box-like sculptures which contained, as the central image, a taut, heavy rope, also painted white. These were the first of a series of similar works of varying sizes which came to be titled *Dante's Inferno*. This title was suggested to the artist by Barnett Newman. Each work can be seen to symbolize and is named after (each of) the characters in Dante's imaginary reality. There is the quality and content of a surrealist landscape in Savelli's white boxes to which the rope adds an element of reality, providing each space with a concrete symbol which, like the symbolic ladder, has profound metaphysical meaning.

Following the *Inferno* series, Savelli began making rectangular and triangular rooms which he titled *Paradise*. These are white spaces into which the viewer cannot enter and which contain white paintings. Their symmetry gives them a quality of serenity, and they appear to be permeated by etherealized light. These works are meant to be contemplated, that is, they open the way to achieving a metaphysical experience and a state of happiness, consistent with Dante's purpose in the *Divine Comedy*.

These rooms not only evolve out of the smaller boxes of the *Inferno*, but also have a source in Savelli's profound recollection of the small

grotto altar in Italy which was created by his grandfather and his uncle.

In all of the works of this period, one is aware of the presence of a vibrating form and light-space which, in the artist's words, is so constituted "as to blend into the viewer's aura in order to reach an aesthetic, ideal unity."

These remarkable works will be exhibited in Washington at the Henri Gallery and at The Corcoran Gallery of Art. They prove to be a contemporary interpretation of a universal theme depicting the process from damnation to heavenly bliss by means of new symbols and by the artist's extraordinary use of the effect of light and geometrical space.

JAMES HARITHAS Director, The Corcoran Gallery of Art.



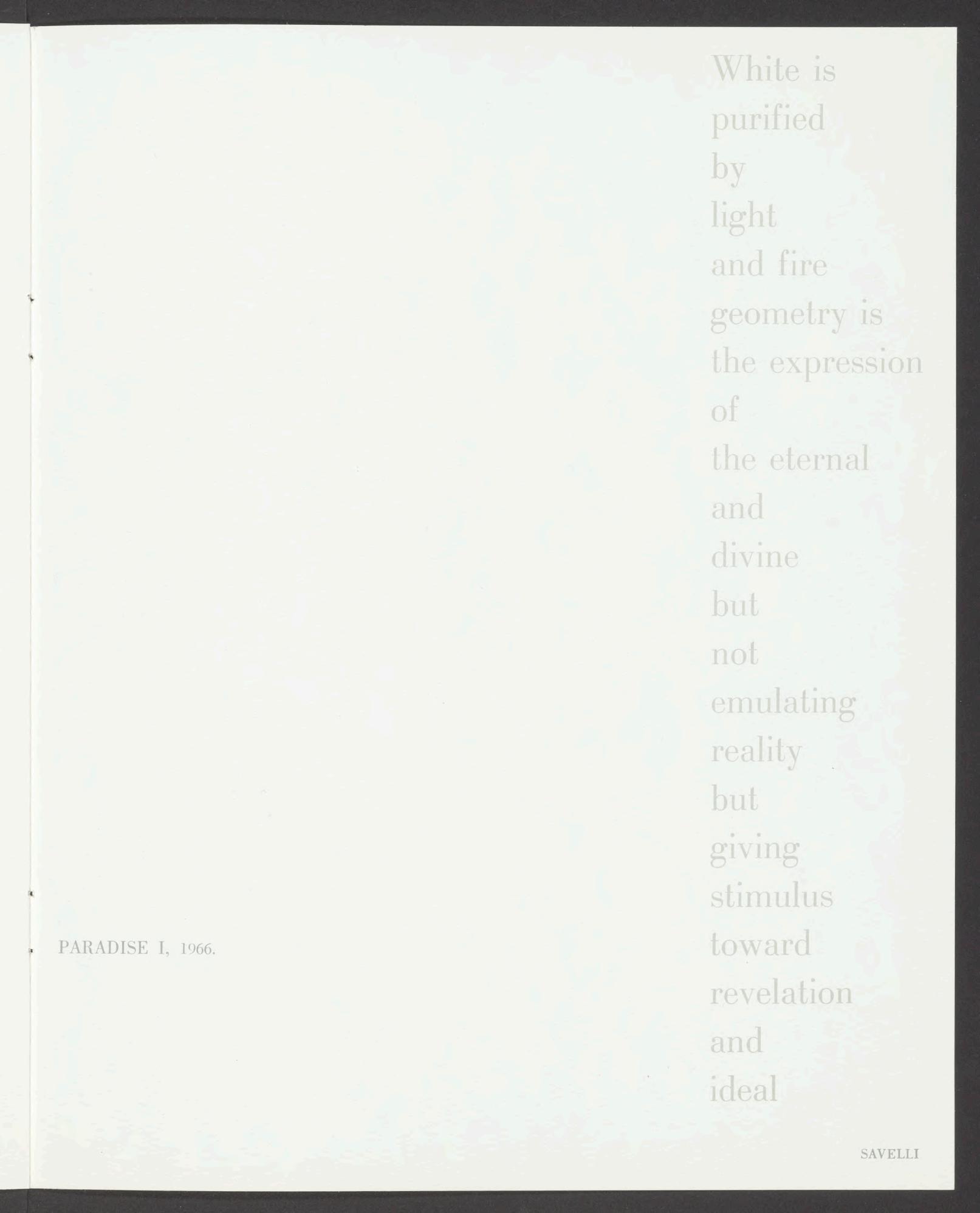


PARADISE II, 1967.

20' x 20' x 14' 5" appr.

Full scale model in wood to
be executed in baked white aluminum.





PARADISE I, 1966.

White is
purified
by
light
and fire
geometry is
the expression
of
the eternal
and
divine
but
not
emulating
reality
but
giving
stimulus
toward
revelation
and
ideal



The vertical line

presents

the symbolic

image of man

standing

with dignity

and severity

as well as

winner

over

disaster

cruelty of nature

and

mankind

DANTE'S INFERN, 1964-1968 (detail).
Baked white aluminum, wood, plexiglass, rope.

SAVELLI

PLATO 6, 1966.
9' 6" x 2' 6"
Baked white aluminum.

SAVELLI BIOGRAPHY

1911 Born October 30, Pizzo Calabria, Italy.

1923-29 Studied Ginnasio Filangieri Vibo, Valentia, Italy.
Received first instructions from his uncle Alfonzo Barone.

1930-36 Maturitá Artistica, Liceo Artistico, Rome, Italy.
Diploma, Accademia Di Belle Arti, Rome.
Studied with Ferruccio Ferrazzi.

1940 Invited to teach at Liceo Artistico, Rome, Italy.

1945 Co-founder of the Art Club of Rome.

1948 Lived in Paris for almost one year.

1954 Established his residence in New York, USA.

1960 Explored in a new direction the lithographic process for his white reliefs.
Established the painting program and conducted classes at the School of Fine Arts of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

1964 Biennale of Venice—exhibited “The White Room.”
(Graphics and wall reliefs.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ONE-MAN SHOWS:

1941	Galleria Roma, Rome
1942	Galleria della Spigna, Milan Galleria Cairola, Genova
1943	Galleria del Ritrovo, Rome
1944	Galleria San Marco, Rome
1946	Galleria Cronache, Bologna Galleria Oblo, Capri
1947	Galleria Naviglio, Milan Galleria del Secolo, Rome Galleria Michelazzi, Trieste Galleria del l'Obelisco, Rome
1951	Galleria San Marco, Rome
1952	Centre d'Art Italien, Paris
1953	Galleria Numero, Florence
1954	Galleria Naviglio, Milan Retrospective Exhibition, Palazzo Del Governo, Catanzaro
1955	The Contemporaries, New York
1956	D'Amecourt Gallery, Washington
1958	Castelli Gallery, New York Galleria del Cavallino, Venice
1959	Galleria Selecta, Rome Ellison Gallery, Fort Worth, Texas
1960	Tweed Gallery, University of Minnesota, Duluth
1961	Galleria del Naviglio, Milan Galleria del Grattocielo, Legnano Galleria Art Workshop, Positano
1962	Peter Deitsch Gallery, New York Galleria Quadrante, Firenze
1963	D'Arcy Gallery, New York Art Alliance, Philadelphia
1964	XXXII International Biennale, Venice Eastern Illinois University, Charleston Wellfleet Art Gallery, Wellfleet
1966	Contemporary Prints and Drawings, Chicago, Illinois
1969	Henri Gallery, Washington

SELECTED GROUP SHOWS:

1935	Mostra Regionale Calabrese, Catanzaro	1958	New Tendencies in Italian Art, Fondazione Roma, New York and Rome
1943	Quadriennale di Roma, National Exhibition	1959	Graphics, Pratt-Contemporaries Workshop, Riverside Museum, New York Collage, Area Gallery, New York Annual Graphics Exhibition, Library of Congress, Washington Quadriennale di Roma, Rome
1944	Art Club of Rome in Cairo, Alexandria, and Buenos Aires	1961	George Lester Gallery, Rome Primio Lissone (international show) IV Biennale del Mediterraneo, organized by the Biennale of Venice, in Cairo
1945	Biennale, Reggio Calabria	1962	The Brooklyn Museum, New York American Federation of Arts (circulating exhibition) Premio Marzotto selected European artists' show in Valdagno and Baden La Deuxieme Exposition du Relief (international show), Gallerie Siecle, Paris Print Club of Philadelphia
1946	Roman Group in Washington, D. C. and New York	1963	White Chapel Gallery, London Musee des Arts Decoratifs, Paris Society of American Graphic Artists, New York University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, Mass. Art Alliance, Philadelphia Library of Congress, Washington Graphics, Seattle and Portland USA Cultural Exchange Show in 5 important Russian cities Biennale Internazionale Grafica di Lubiana, Yugoslavia "Moods of Light," circulating exhibition, American Federation of Arts Biennale of Palermo, Italy
1948	Art Club in Union of South Africa, Johannesburg	1964	The Spirit of The Classic, Janis Gallery, New York The Contemporaries, New York The Brooklyn Museum, New York The Jewish Museum, New York Exposition Biennale, Internationale de Gravure, Tokyo
1949	Exhibition of Italian Art, Salzburg and Vienna	1965	Galleria d'Arte Ambasciata del Brasile, Rome Galleria Ferrari, Verona The State University College, Potsdam, New York
1950	Biennale di Venezia Fifty Italian Painters, Paris	1966	Quadriennale d'Arte di Roma, Rome Library of Congress, Washington Art Alliance, Philadelphia The Brooklyn Museum, New York Galleria Obelisco, Rome The Saga 47th Annual, New York Annual Exhibition, Whitney Museum, New York
1951	Art Club in Stockholm, Helsinki, Gothenburg, Oslo, Copenhagen	1967	Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia University of Kentucky Art Gallery, Lexington Annual Exhibition, Whitney Museum, New York
1952	Biennale di Venezia	1968	The Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada Annual Exhibition, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia Saga A.A.A. Gallery, New York University of Kentucky Art Gallery, Lexington Grand Prize Winners, Venice Biennale, 1948-1968, Rive Gauche Gallery, Rome The Maremont Collection, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, Arizona
1953	Arte Astratta Italiana e Francese, Galleria Nazionale D'Arte Moderna, Rome	1969	The Corcoran Gallery of Art. Biennial Exhibition of American Art Two Decades of American Prints, 1947-1968, The Brooklyn Museum, New York
1955	Stable Annual, New York		
1956	International Collage, Rose Fried Gallery, New York Graphics, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Conn.		
1957	Castelli Gallery, Poindexter Gallery and Brooklyn Museum, New York "Collage in America," circulating exhibition, American Federation of Arts Art Gallery, Baltimore Museum American Painting, circulating exhibition in Canada		

I see with white eyes

I think with white mind

I act with white hands in a white body

I walk in a white world

I breathe in a white sky

I am high, high on a white mountain

And I am looking deeply down

Between earth and sky,
Between known and unknown,
Between inferno and paradise.

With balance and tension
and equilibrium and continuity,
Aesthetic fulfillment
of the human soul.

By sublimating the idea of proportion
As divine concept
And inner reality.

Going through an experience
of concentration on a single image
And a bidimensional space,
To clarify our mirror mind
In order to reach reality
In its truthful state.
To eliminate complicated dimensions
In color and illusory space,
Which are sources
Of our deformed images
Of reality and truth . . . and to see
“The light
That never changes.”

